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PRESS RELEASE

State Officials Kick-Off Plant Something for Pollinators Campaign

Annual Spring Campaign Supports Local Nurseries and Flower Growers

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BOSTON — May 13, 2016 – Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) Commissioner John Lebeaux today were joined by members of the agricultural community today to kick off the *Plant Something for Pollinators* campaign by planting flowers and shrubs in Boston's Beacon Hill.

“Plant Something for Pollinators recognizes the contributions Massachusetts’ flower and nursery growers make to the Commonwealth,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “I urge everyone to get outside and plant a tree, flower or shrub this spring and make the Commonwealth a healthier and more beautiful place.”

“Planting something at your home will not only make it more beautiful, it can also lower your energy costs and clean the air you breathe, while providing necessary environmental benefits,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** “By purchasing a plant from your local nursery, you can support your local agricultural economy and make a contribution to the environment.”

The *Plant Something for Pollinators* campaign, which officially starts on May 15, 2016, is a joint program organized by the Massachusetts Flower Growers Association (MFGA) and the Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association (MNLA). This year’s campaign encourages residents to plant at least one pollinator-friendly plant to improve pollinator populations across the Commonwealth.

“Planting is a great way to spend time in nature, help the environment and support Massachusetts agriculture,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton.** “Vegetation also helps our vital pollinator populations, reduces storm water runoff and removes carbon dioxide and other pollutants from the air.”

There are approximately 1,039 Massachusetts farms in floriculture, nursery, greenhouse and sod, employing more than 4,000 workers. The industry generated \$158 million in sales in 2012.

“Many residents are already growing vegetables and planting flowers,” **said DAR Commissioner John Lebeaux.** “We are pleased to support our flower and nursery professionals to inspire even more people to give it a try. Planting something is good for you, the pollinators, your community and the local economy.”

“Most people realize that plants and trees provide shade, increase property value, and are good for the environment, but they may not realize that plants can also reduce stress and improve your health,” **said MFGA Executive Secretary Bob Luczai.** “Gardening can burn up to 600 calories an hour!”

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